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Very Scarce

IN MEMORIAM.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN DEAD.

A POEM

BY

ALFRED B. STREET.

Republished from the N. Y. Independent, April 1865.



Oh! ages shall receive
Into their hearts his glory! He was pure
And steadfast, and he stood when others fell;
For his, the noble patience to endure,
And to his cheerful soul all things were well.

ALBANY, N. Y.:

Andrew Boyd, Novelty Printing Press.
1870.

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PRESIDENT LINCOLN DEAD.

A wail is on the air, the solemn sound
Of a great nation's loss! its mighty grief
Heaves deep pulsations through its utmost bound.

The nation's loftiest one, its mightiest chief,
Lies stricken foully low; the bitter wail
Fills every heart and swells on every gale.

The nation's chief lies low! Not laureled Death,
At his life's end, bore quietly his breath;
But, while his manhood's oak stood strong and tall,

The sunshine on its leaves, and happy song
Thrilling within, the keen, red bolt shot down,
When the blue heavens shone o'er without a frown.
War at his feet his thundering trump had dashed,

And Peace was taking up her warbling lyre,
And flowers were burying soft the thorns, when flashed,
 How quick! how deadly! the assassin's fire,
Quick like the shooting of the serpent's fang
Before the victim shrinks! the lightning sprang
And the strong heart was cloven! woe, deep woe,
To the dear land he loved! her tears must flow
Through many a lingering year! for his great soul
Was full of her, her glory was his goal.
When Treason reared its crimson front, he rose—
 Rose like the flame from darkness, like the morn
 From night, like some grand pealing anthem, born
From silence; all unheralded, he shows,
Sudden, his radiant presence. Wildly blows
Full on the bark the vengeance of the storm;
Up leap the waves, and black the heavens have grown—
Grown in an instant! whose that towering form
 Grasping the helm! all turn to him alone,
All in the bark; his eye the beacon fire,
His voice the clarion of command! the ire
Of the fierce storm flames fiercer, fiercer still,
And brighter shines his courage; steadier will
Stars his poised soul. Ah, the light, sunny play
Of his strong thoughts at rest! the clear, broad ray
They poured when roused! the high, deep wisdom shown



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In action! the resolve slow formed, and then
Quick as the arrow to its mark! no change!

Not firmer stands the rooted rock than he
Once planted. His just, tender heart had known
Slavery's most wicked curse; and knowing, when
The full time came, his far and prescient range

Compassed the end. To the dark upas tree
He laid the axe. Sing paens to his praise!

Shout loud hosannas, for the land is free!
Red Treason's hand did Slavery's banner raise,
And freedom's falchion in his clutch did cleave
The foul flag low! Oh, ages shall receive
Into their heart his glory! He was pure
And steadfast, and he stood when others fell;
For his, the noble patience to endure,
And to his cheerful soul all things were well.
And he is gone! Gone when our skies were bright
With promise; when the rainbow's lovely light
Was breaking; when white peace, the glittering dove,
Threw courier colors on the cloven cloud;

When promised Spring was bursting, and above
And round were ringing hallelujahs loud.
Four years of blood and horror! four wild years
Have fled, and he, who, like a planet, rose
To cheer all eyes, has vanished! Ah, what fears

Darken the land, for Freedom's deadly foes
Live yet! Still let us trust in Him whose light
Shone o'er the waste to guide our steps aright.
All peaceful should the good man's end have been,
With the soft sun of being sinking sweet
Upon a smiling scene! his cloudless ken
Should have known golden hues alone! his feet
Couches of flowers! his ear the song of bird,
Murmur of stream, the peaceful low of herd,
And hum of bee! How tenderly would then
The nation's heart have wrapped him in repose,
While as life's sunset fell the stars of glory rose.

For ever green will his loved memory flourish,
For ever green when marble piles decay;
Green in his soul's grand thoughts the land shall nourish,
Green in the deeds its destinies shall sway.

And thou, my country! dangers still entwine thee,
And foes still frown, or lull, with treacherous breath;
But in our heart of hearts we will enshrine thee,
And swear to guard thee, guard thee unto death.

On Freedom's arm we lean in proud reliance,
Strong to protect and powerful to save;
In Treason's teeth we hurl our stern defiance,
And swear to drag it to its guilty grave.
Past is the storm, with its hot, blasting thunder,

Past the deep darkness of the billowy sea;
But light shines not, though clouds be rent asunder,
It is the twilight only that is free :
And in that twilight crime will dark be crouching,
With murderous hand, to do what strife could not;
In flowers of friendship will the snake be crouching;
Pitfalls will lurk in Hope's most bowery spot.
Our Ship of State hath rode the furious surges,
White with dismay and horrible with wrath;
But the fierce ground-swell still the vessel urges
In mountain billows on her plunging path.
Save her, great Heaven! oh, save the hope of ages.
Let not the bark be wrecked in sight of shore !
Guide with Thy reins the madness still that rages!
So shall the world's grand hope be saved for evermore,

